

# 2013 Selected Highlights



Martin O'Malley  
*Governor*

Anthony G. Brown  
*Lt. Governor*

Joshua M. Sharfstein, M.D.  
*Secretary, DHMH*

January 2014

Dear Colleagues:

2013 was a year of tremendous change and accomplishment for the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. From overdose prevention to telemedicine, from enrolling children in health coverage to enhancing cultural competence in medical practice, the Department took action to prevent injury and illness and save lives. In many cases, our achievements have earned national attention and recognition.

This document provides some of the highlights of the past year. Hyperlinks are included in the electronic version so that readers can learn more. These and other accomplishments will have an impact that outlasts even the most persistent challenges of the Maryland Health Connection website!

I thank all of the dedicated staff of the Department for their commitment to public service and to the health of Maryland.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Josh M. Sharfstein".

Joshua M. Sharfstein, M.D.  
Secretary

# January

## Health Enterprise Zones Launch



Lt. Governor Anthony G. Brown announces the designation of the state's first Health Enterprise Zones in five locations: Capitol Heights in Prince George's County, Greater Lexington Park in St. Mary's County, Dorchester and Caroline Counties, West Baltimore, and Annapolis. Community locations in each area will receive a range of incentives, benefits, and grant funding to address unacceptable and persistent health disparities. The purposes of the initiative are to: (1) Reduce health disparities among racial and ethnic minority populations and among

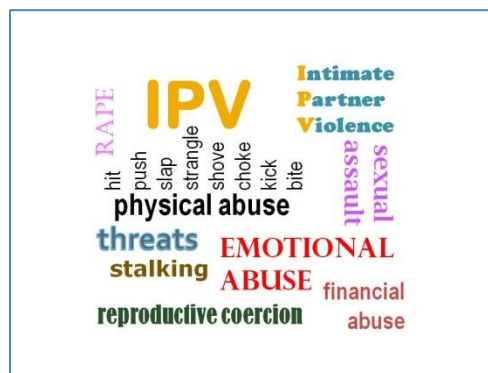
geographic areas; (2) Improve healthcare access and health outcomes in underserved communities; and (3) Reduce healthcare costs and hospital admissions and re-admissions.

## New Program Boosts Children's Mental Health Care

The Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, the Department of Education, the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, the University of Maryland School of Medicine, and the Salisbury University Department of Social Work launch a program to support the efforts of pediatric primary care providers to assess and manage mental health concerns in their patients. The Behavioral Health Integration in Pediatric Primary Care program will enable primary care providers from around the state to receive timely, expert consultation.

## Efforts to Combat Domestic Violence Expand

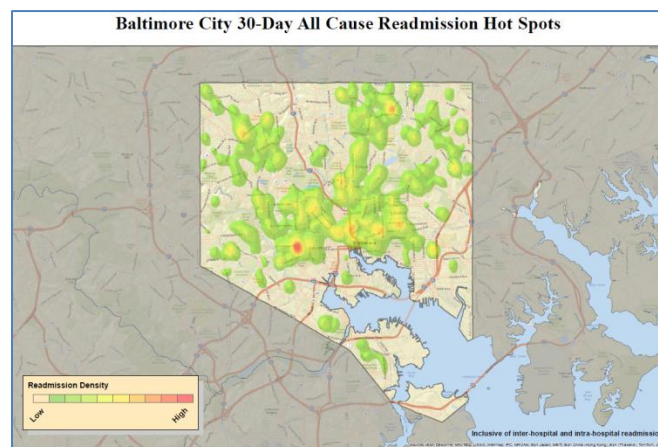
Lt. Governor Anthony G. Brown and the Department announce that Maryland is one of six states selected for a competitive grant to fund Project Connect Maryland, a program which helps providers protect women from domestic violence. The program will integrate intimate partner violence assessment into all health care visits at selected reproductive health sites utilizing acclaimed comprehensive curricula and educational materials.



# February

## [Maryland Wins \\$2.4 Million State Innovation Model Grant](#)

The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services announces that Maryland has received a \$2.4 million State Innovation Models grant to fund the development of the new Community-Integrated Medical Home initiative. The initiative will coordinate with public health resources in local communities across Maryland, with new data and mapping resources to create detailed maps highlighting areas with poor health status, high healthcare utilization, and poor outcomes.



## [Hundreds Attend Maryland Million Hearts Symposium](#)

The Department, in partnership with the Delmarva Foundation, brings together public and private partners for the first Maryland Million Hearts Symposium to discuss public health solutions to fighting heart disease and stroke, two of Maryland's leading causes of death. In 2012, Maryland became the first state to sign its own Million Hearts commitment. The Maryland Million Hearts Symposium, attended by more than 250 people, featured presentations on workplace wellness, healthcare reform, creating healthy environments in schools and childcare settings, and improving cardiovascular health through collaboration of health professionals.



# March

## Literacy Partnerships Expand in Maryland

The Department and the Maryland State Department of Education joins with the Maryland Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics to announce a major expansion of the Reach Out and Read Program. Reach Out and Read is a nonprofit organization that promotes early literacy and school readiness nationwide, by partnering with pediatricians who give new books to children and advice to parents about the importance of reading aloud.



## Employed Individuals with Disabilities Program Helps More Marylanders

The Department announces regulation changes that will make the Employed Individuals with Disabilities Program more customer friendly. The program is a work incentive that



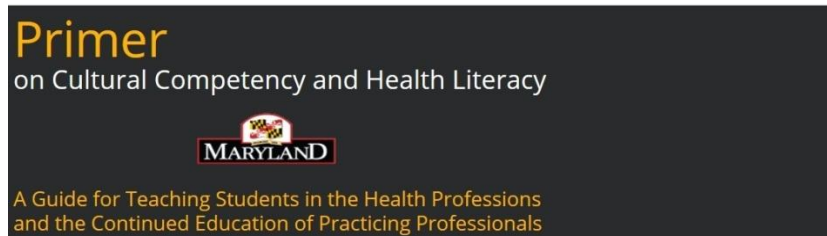
qualifies working Marylanders with disabilities for Medicaid (Medical Assistance) benefits. Basic eligibility will not change but the regulation changes will improve the program in three ways: a person enrolled in the program may keep Medicaid for up to six months if they lose

employment or are out of work for medical reasons; monthly premiums will be waived for up to the first 6 months of enrollment; and the resource (asset) limit for married couples will increase to \$15,000.

# April

## [Maryland Releases Teaching Guide on Cultural Competency and Health Literacy to Improve Health Outcomes and Reduce Disparities](#)

The Department's Office of Minority Health and Health Disparities and the University of Maryland School of Public Health and its Herschel S. Horowitz Center for Health Literacy



release the "Cultural Competency and Health Literacy Primer: A Guide for Teaching Health and Professionals and Students". The Primer provides tools to improve cross-cultural

communication skills, deliver culturally and linguistically appropriate healthcare services to diverse populations, and to develop programs and policies to improve health outcomes and reduce health disparities.

## [Calls Increase to Maryland Tobacco Quitline](#)

Calls to the Maryland Tobacco Quitline break records due to powerful new anti-tobacco ads.

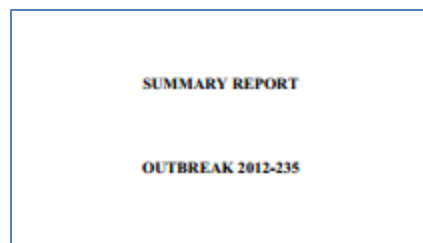
Maryland residents 13 years and older are encouraged to call 1-800-QUIT NOW for FREE counseling services 24 hours a

day, seven days a week. Services are in English and Spanish and other languages via translation services. Additionally, tobacco users 18 years and older have FREE access to benefits for quitting tobacco use.



# May

## [New Laws Strengthen Patient Protections in Maryland](#)



Governor Martin O'Malley signs three new laws that will provide critical protections for patients in Maryland. The Department advocated in favor of the new laws, which will call for greater oversight and protection in a variety of settings, strengthening protections for Maryland patients.

The new laws authorize the Department to adopt regulations to oversee cosmetic surgical facilities, including "medical spa" facilities; require facilities and practitioners who either create or distribute pharmaceuticals created using sterile compounding in Maryland to acquire a permit from the Maryland Board of Pharmacy; and require all healthcare staffing agencies operating in Maryland to be licensed by the Office of Health Care Quality.

## [Fund Supports Health Information Technology Adoption in Four Maryland Nursing Homes](#)

Lt. Governor Anthony G. Brown and the Maryland Health Care Commission, in collaboration with the Chesapeake Regional Information System for our Patients, announce \$517,000 in grant funding for four independent nursing homes in Maryland. The funds will be used to facilitate the adoption and use of health information technology among independent nursing homes to support improved coordinated care between hospitals and nursing home facilities. The announcement highlights the latest step in the health information technology transformation occurring in Maryland. As a key component of each project, grant awardees will use an encounter notification service to alert their facilities' physicians and care coordinators in real-time when one of their patients has an encounter with a Maryland hospital, such as an admission, discharge, or transfer.

## Maryland's Ban on Sale of Crib Bumper Pads Takes Effect



Maryland becomes the first state in the nation to take action in response to the potentially serious risks to infants, including suffocation and death, posed by crib bumper pads. The American Academy of Pediatrics, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the National Institutes of Health all advise against the use of crib bumper pads. The ban is part of an ongoing Maryland public health effort to educate parents about safe sleep practices for babies.

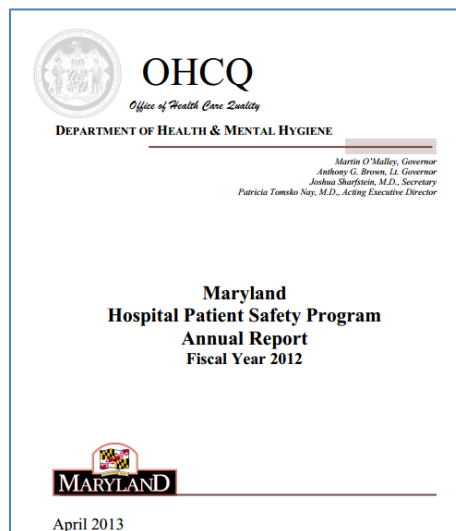


## Hospital Patient Safety Report Provides Data, Analysis and Recommendations

The Department's Office of Health Care Quality releases its annual Hospital Patient Safety Report, which analyzes the serious adverse events reported by Maryland hospitals in Fiscal Year 2012.

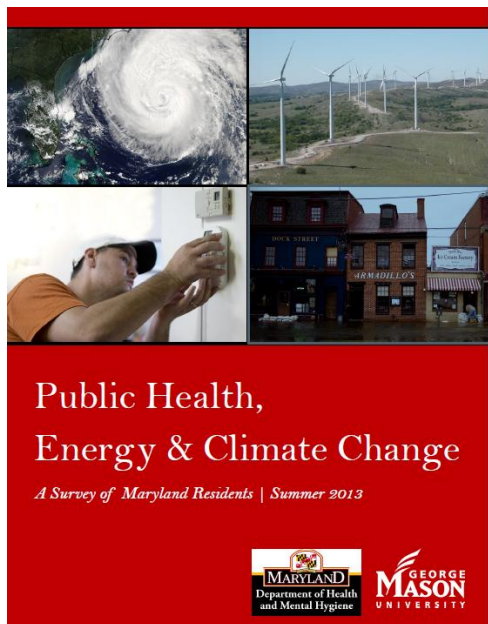
The key findings of the report provide a basis for informed recommendations for improved hospital care.

The Office of Health Care Quality works with Maryland hospitals and the Maryland Patient Safety Center to promote these and other recommendations.



# July

## Majority of Marylanders Believe Climate Change Poses Public Health Threat



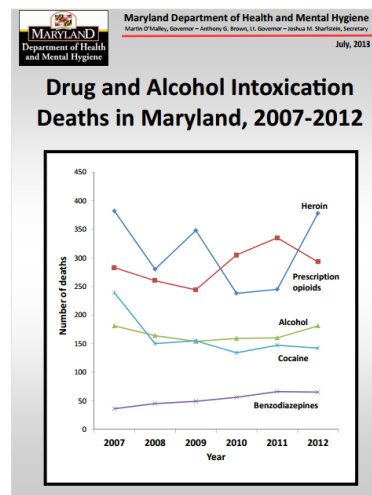
The Department, in conjunction with the Climate Communication Consortium of Maryland and George Mason University, release results of the first comprehensive survey of Maryland residents to find out what they think about the public health impacts of climate change. The survey was conducted, in part, to help the Department understand public attitudes about health and the environment, and, particularly, about two important environmental changes occurring today: climate change and changes in the energy picture of the state and the nation. More than half of Marylanders (52 percent) believe people in the United States are being harmed by climate change. A majority of Marylanders believe respiratory problems, injuries from storms or other extreme weather events and heat stroke will become more common because of climate change. The survey

results provide insight for policy makers, public health officials, and the public about Maryland's response to climate change and energy needs.

## State and Local Officials Respond to Increase in Heroin Overdoses

The Department releases a report showing an increase in the number of heroin-related deaths from 245 in 2011 to 378 in 2012, a 54 percent rise. This increase led to a 15 percent rise in the total number of fatal drug and alcohol related overdoses in the state, from 663 in 2011 to 761 in 2012.

In response, the Department issued a public health alert and directed all Maryland counties and Baltimore City to develop an overdose response plan. Roundtables with law enforcement authorities and public health authorities are held around the state.



# August

## [Governor Announces Maryland Infant Mortality Rates Driven Down to New Record Low in 2012](#)

Governor Martin O'Malley announces that Maryland's infant mortality rate hit a new record low in 2012, driven largely by a reduction in the African American infant mortality rate. The infant mortality rate in 2012 was 6.3 per 1,000 live births, down six percent from 2011. The mortality rate for African American infants declined by 14 percent to 10.3 per 1,000 live births. The infant mortality rate has fallen by 21 percent between 2008 and 2012, which translates to 159 fewer infant deaths in 2012 compared to 2008. Many factors have contributed to the decline including expanded health care access for young women and parents and expanded access to family planning services, local public health efforts, and promoting safe sleeping practices.



## [Maryland Hospitals Commit to Better Support for New Breastfeeding Mothers](#)

Less than nine months after the Department launched a statewide initiative to improve the support that hospitals give to breastfeeding mothers, all 32 birthing hospitals in Maryland have committed to adopt Maryland's Hospital Breastfeeding Policy Recommendations or become certified as "Baby-Friendly." Providing breastfeeding support to mothers who choose to breastfeed after delivery is the first step in promoting the long-term health benefits of nursing.

# September

## **DHMH Tests Public Health Emergency Plans in Statewide Exercise**

The Department's Office of Preparedness and Response holds a large-scale statewide Strategic National Stockpile Distribution Exercise to test the process for requesting, delivering and receiving medical supplies in the event of a public health emergency. The supplies are part of the Strategic National Stockpile. The exercise brought together nearly 100 participating groups including local health departments, hospitals, law enforcement, state agencies and facilities, and federal agencies. Maryland has received a 100 out of 100 score from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention for its readiness to distribute materials from the Strategic National Stockpile.

## **Maryland Receives \$6.4 Million in Federal Funding to Expand Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting Services**

The Department announces that the Department's Office of Family Planning and Home Visiting has been awarded a competitive, two-year \$6.4 million "Maternal, Infant and Early Childhood Home Visiting Program Expansion" grant from the Health Resources and Services Administration. The aim of the grant is to expand the availability of home visiting programs to improve outcomes and reduce health and developmental disabilities for at-risk expectant families and families with young children. The Department will use the funds to expand the availability of home visiting programs in areas of greatest need in the state.

## **State Receives \$1.5 Million Federal Funding to Expand Oral Health Efforts**

The Department announces that the Department's Office of Oral Health has been awarded a competitive, five-year \$1.5 million "State Oral Disease



Prevention Program" grant from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The aim of the grant is to improve the oral health of Maryland residents, particularly, children and adults who are most at risk for oral diseases such as tooth decay (cavities). Maryland has continued to perform above the national average for providing dental services to children. In 2011, the percentage of all Maryland children in Medicaid receiving a dental service was 66.4 percent (241,149 children) compared to the national average for Medicaid (CY 2010) which was 47.8 percent.

# October

## [Maryland Medicaid Launches New Telemedicine Programs](#)

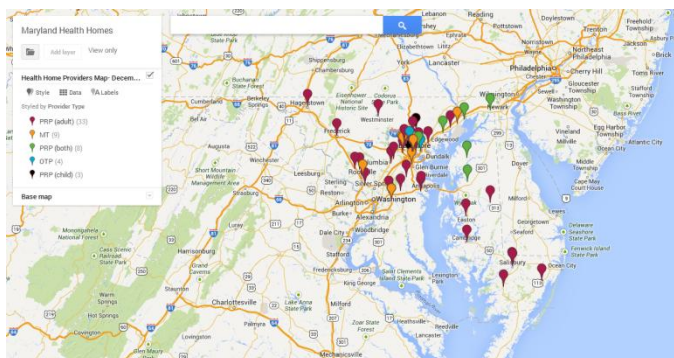
The Medicaid Program will now reimburse approved healthcare providers for services delivered via telemedicine. Maryland Medicaid is implementing two telemedicine programs - the Rural Access Telemedicine Program and the Cardiovascular Disease and Stroke Telemedicine Program - to improve participant access to consulting Medicaid providers when an appropriate specialist is not available to provide a timely consultation.

## [Maryland Submits Application to Modernize All-Payer System](#)

Governor Martin O'Malley announces that Maryland has submitted to the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services a revised proposal for an unprecedented and innovative model to improve healthcare outcomes, enhance patient experiences, and control costs across the state. The proposal, developed and revised over the last year with input from a broad range of stakeholders, will modernize the state's all-payer rate setting system for hospital services. In early January, the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services announces approval of this historic proposal.

## [Department Launches Health Home Initiative](#)

Maryland Medicaid supports new “Health Homes” for individuals with chronic conditions to augment the state’s broader efforts to integrate somatic and behavioral health services. The program will target populations with behavioral health needs who are at high risk for additional chronic conditions, offering them enhanced care coordination services from providers with whom they regularly receive care. Health Homes are designed to enhance patient-centered care, empowering participants to manage and prevent chronic conditions in order to improve health outcomes, while reducing avoidable hospital encounters.



# November

## State Issues New Parental Consent Form for Indoor Tanning

**MARYLAND**  
Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

**INDOOR TANNING DEVICES**  
OFFICIAL PARENT/GUARDIAN CONSENT FORM

Indoor tanning devices are tanning salons, or operators of a tanning facility may not allow a minor under the age of 18 years to use a tanning device unless the minor obtains an official parental consent form from the parent or legal guardian of the minor. The parent or legal guardian of the minor must read and understand the risks of indoor tanning and sign the form in the presence of the minor and the operator of the tanning facility. (16A Code Ann., Health-General Article 16B-101(b)(1), AND PENNSYLVANIA WHERE A TANNING DEVICE IS USED FOR A FEE, W/REQUIREMENT FOR, OR OTHER CONSENTATION MUST OBTAIN FROM THE MINOR, WITHOUT MODIFICATION.

**TO BE COMPLETED BY PARENT OR GUARDIAN IN THE PRESENCE OF OPERATOR**

- Indoor tanning can cause skin cancer. Skin cancer can be fatal. To reduce the risk of skin cancer, the American Academy of Pediatrics and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration recommend that children under age 18 never use tanning devices.
- Indoor tanning is also associated with allergic reactions, early skin aging, and damage to the eyes.
- Risks from indoor tanning are especially high for individuals who:
  - Have a family history of skin cancer
  - Have light skin with freckling, a history of skin problems, or are light sensitive
  - Are pregnant
  - Take certain medications
- Without appropriate eye protection, indoor tanning can cause serious eye damage.
  - Wavelengths are not appropriate eye protection.
- Your child's doctor can discuss the risks of indoor tanning with you and your child.

I have read and understood the information above: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_ (Cell) P. \_\_\_\_\_

As the parent or legal guardian of \_\_\_\_\_ I give consent for him/her to use the tanning devices in this facility for the number of sessions listed below (mark only one box):

☐ One visit only ☐ A total of \_\_\_\_\_ visits from start date: \_\_\_\_\_ to end date: \_\_\_\_\_ (maximum of 12 months)

Signature of parent/legal guardian: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Print name of parent/legal guardian: \_\_\_\_\_

This form is valid and effective for use in six months from the date of signature of the parent or legal guardian.

**TO BE COMPLETED BY OPERATOR**

Type of tanning device used: \_\_\_\_\_ ID # \_\_\_\_\_

Tanning facility: \_\_\_\_\_ Operator Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Operator Name (print): \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

The minor's signature (below) does not imply or indicate consent. It is recorded only for identification purposes.

Signature of Minor: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Minor (please print): \_\_\_\_\_

DDH01-AR000 Revised 10/15/2012

After extensive public input, the Department finalizes revisions to the forms that tanning facilities must use to obtain consent from a parent or legal guardian before a minor may use a tanning device.

The form contains language approved unanimously by the Council on Cancer Control, stating that “Indoor tanning can cause skin cancer. Skin cancer can be fatal. To reduce the risk of skin cancer, the American Academy of Pediatrics and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration recommend that children under age 18 never use tanning devices.”

## Governor Announces Appointments to Virginia I. Jones Alzheimer's Disease and Related Disorders Council

Governor Martin O'Malley announces the appointment of 17 members to the Virginia I. Jones Alzheimer's Disease and Related Disorders Council, as designated by SB 679. The legislation creates a council to continue the work initiated by the previous



Alzheimer's Disease and Related Disorders Commission, including development and monitoring of the 2012 Maryland State Plan on Alzheimer's Disease and Related Disorders.

## Three State Hospitals Named Top Performers for Quality

Clifton T. Perkins Hospital Center, Thomas B. Finan Center, and Spring Grove Hospital Center were named *Top Performers on Key Quality Measures* by the Joint Commission, the leading accreditor of healthcare organizations in America. The hospitals were recognized for exemplary performance in using evidenced-based clinical processes that are shown to improve care for inpatient psychiatric services.

# December

## State's Prescription Drug Monitoring Program Launches for Healthcare Providers



The Department announces the launch of access to Maryland's Prescription Drug Monitoring Program for healthcare providers. The goal of the program is to assist providers, public health professionals and other stakeholders in reducing the misuse, abuse and diversion of prescription drugs. For the first time, providers will have online access to their patients' Maryland controlled substance prescription history.

The state's prescription drug monitoring program is integrated into CRISP, the state's health information exchange.

## Maryland Receives \$43.5 Million Bonus for Enrolling Children in Health Coverage

Maryland received the second highest bonus awarded nationally for progress made enrolling children in Medicaid and the Maryland Children's Health Program. The Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services recognized Maryland's efforts to base eligibility on a family's income alone (and not also on the family's possessions); eliminate the requirement that applicants apply in person; streamline the initial application form so that it is as simple as the renewal form; and allow proof of eligibility for other low-income programs to be deemed sufficient to qualify for Medicaid (which is known as "express lane eligibility").

